

# Achieving Management Excellence and Results: Your Agency Self-Assessment



**The need for agency self-assessment.** The citizens of Washington demand – and deserve – real results from their investment in state government. Results flow from good management; good management in turn begins with an honest self-appraisal. This document describes how to use the attached Agency Self-Assessment Form to help you improve the services your agency provides.

A further reason for self-assessment comes from your statutory obligation imposed by RCW 43.17.390 (HB 1970, passed in 2005) which requires each agency to:

1. Conduct an annual self-assessment of its “management, accountability, and performance system,” and
2. Apply for a recognized external assessment (such as the Washington State Quality Award) at least once every 3 years, beginning in 2008.

**Completing the attached Form will satisfy your annual self-assessment obligation to the legislature.** We will also be providing agencies with support in obtaining useful external assessment at a later date.

**Is there a required format to use for the self assessment?** Yes. To give us a consistent, enterprise-wide view, every agency will complete the attached Agency Self-Assessment Form. This simple form is an updated version of the self-assessment form most agencies have been using for several years. If your agency has a history of using a different self-assessment form, please have your assessment process leader use your most current data as a basis for completing the attached form. Then, please send us the completed form, along with a brief paragraph describing your process and the two or three areas your management team has identified for improvement, as described in the **recommended process** below.

**How does this process fit with the other expectations on us?** The Self-Assessment is a way to assess how all our efforts to improve government management are coming together. The Form is based on the seven-step process for effective management of state government (shown in the diagram above) laid out in Governor Gregoire’s recently released Management Framework. The self-assessment process ties together GMAP, POG, the strategic planning process laid out in OFM’s Budget Guidelines, and DOP’s HR Scorecard. Our goal is to effectively integrate all our management practices; if you have suggestions for how we can do better, please e-mail Barb Burgener at [barb.burgener@gov.wa.gov](mailto:barb.burgener@gov.wa.gov).

**How long will this Self-Assessment take?** We have outlined a process (below) that can be completed in **one meeting** of an agency assessment team, plus part of one meeting of your agency’s top management team (along with some extra effort by someone to coordinate things). By devoting even more time and energy to this process, you can make the outcome even more meaningful, but that choice is up to you.

**By when do we need to complete the Self-Assessment?** The completed Form is due in the Governor's Office by **September 30, 2006**, and yearly thereafter.

**How should we use the Form?** Here is a **recommended process**:

1. Assign a point person in your agency to shepherd this process. They will be responsible to adjust the process described here to fit your agency's particular needs, to gather input from agency managers and staff, and to forward the completed Form to the Governor's Office.
2. Pull together a team that is a "diagonal slice" of your organization; that is, it's made up of a mix of front-line staff, supervisors, and middle and top managers, representing all the different divisions of your agency. This team should be able to complete the Form in one meeting:
  - Rate your agency on each aspect of the seven categories (for example, under "*Create a Strategic Plan*," rate yourselves on "*Articulate Clear Goals and Values*," "*Understand Customer, Citizen, and Stakeholder Expectations*," etc.)
  - Provide a summary rating for each category (like "*Create a Strategic Plan*") overall.
  - Rate your agency overall.
3. Then, at your next agency management team meeting, have top managers:
  - Review the Self-Assessment results,
  - **Identify two or three critical areas where you need to make improvements**, and
  - Assign responsibility for developing a plan to make progress in those areas (you will be asked to report back on your progress next year).
4. Send your results to Barb Burgener in the Governor's Office by **September 30, 2006**. Include:
  - A one-paragraph description of the method you used to conduct your Self-Assessment,
  - The completed Form, and
  - A brief outline of your action plan for implementing change in the two or three critical areas you identified where you need to make improvements.

**Do we need to follow the recommended process?** No. You need to review your agency's progress in improving as an agency, and **you need to complete the attached Form**. If it seems best to use a different process to achieve that end, feel free to modify the process described above as you see fit. This is **your** self-assessment, for the improvement of your agency – we are not looking to "compare grades," only to learn together by using this tool. Above all, do not go through the motions of a meaningless process just to satisfy a requirement. We can't afford that way of doing business anymore. Use this process to improve the services your agency provides.

**If you need any further assistance, don't hesitate to contact Barb Burgener at**  
[barb.burgener@gov.wa.gov](mailto:barb.burgener@gov.wa.gov)